

### Abstract Of The Invention

A method and apparatus for processing program instructions, utilizes native fixed length instructions that include at least one flag modification enable bit. The flag modification enable bit is typically sent with the operation code and other information in the native instruction and is set to allow updating of one or more flags, such as stored in flag registers, associated with non-native instructions, such as variable length instructions. In addition, a flag modification enable bit may be set to preserve flag bit setting for variable length instructions that are emulated using the fixed length native instructions, to prevent overwriting of flag settings during emulation of variable length instructions.